

Message Text

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42

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 IO-10 AF-06 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04

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P R 171403Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1462

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

AMCONSUL OPORTO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, PINT, PO

SUBJ: SOCIALIST PARTY RALLY OPPOSED UNITARY LABOR MOVEMENT

REF: LISBON 242

SUMMARY: THE SUCCESS OF A SOCIALIST PARTY RALLY JANUARY 16
OPPOSING THE PROPOSED DECREE-LAW WILL CAUSE THE COUNCIL OF
MINISTERS TO WEIGHT CAREFULLY ITS DECISION AND MAKES MORE
POSSIBLE SOME COMPROMISE SOLUTION. END SUMMARY.

1. A SOCIALIST PARTY DEMONSTRATION HELD THE EVENING OF JAN. 16
AT LISBON'S SPORTS PAVILION PROVIDED A FORUM FOR PARTY
LEADERS MARIO SOARES AND MINISTER OF JUSTICE SALGADO ZENHA TO
ATTACK THE PROPOSED IMPOSITION BY LAW OF A UNITARY LABOR MOVEMENT.
THE SPORTS PAVILION WAS FILLED TO OVERFLOWING BY A CROWD
ESTIMATED AT 15,000 (PRESS ESTIMATES RANGE UP TO 50,000).
COVERAGE OF EVENT WAS UNUSUALLY COMPLETE AND FAVORABLE IN
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LISBON'S MORNING NEWSPAPERS.

2. MINISTER OF JUSTICE SALGADO ZENHA IN A STRONGLY-WORDED SPEECH TO THE ENTHUSIASTIC AUDIENCE ASSERTED THAT THE WORKING CLASS IS NOT THE PROPERTY OF ANY POLITICAL PARTY NOR OF THE STATE AND ACCUSED MINISTER OF LABOR COSTA MARTINS OF "NEODIRIGISMO" OF THE WORKERS. THE MINISTER REFERRED TO THE EFFORTS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY TO DECLARE THE EXTREMIST MRPP ILLEGAL AND DECLARED THAT AS LONG AS HE WAS IN GOVERNMENT HE WOULD OPPOSE THE OUTLAWING OF ANY POLITICAL PARTY. HE ATTACKED EFFORTS BY THE COMMUNISTS TO PAINT THE SOCIALISTS AS REACTIONARY AND AS A TOOL OF CIA, AND ACCUSED THEM OF ATTEMPTING TO SABOTAGE THE PRESENT COALITION WHICH THEY PRETEND TO SUPPORT. IN CLOSING, THE MINISTER INDICATED HE WOULD NOT ALLOW HIMSELF TO BE SHOULDERED OUT OF THE GOVERNMENT.

3. PARTY SECRETARY GENERAL MARIO SOARES EMPHASIZED THE SOCIALISTS DEFENSE OF LIBERTY. HE STATED THAT THE SOCIALISTS WOULD NOT SUPPORT THE IMPOSITION OF A DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT BECAUSE SOCIALISTS IDENTIFIED WITH ALL SECTORS OF THE COUNTRY. HE ASSERTED THAT MANIPULATION OF THE MEDIA PRESENTED A FALSE IMAGE OF WORKER SUPPORT FOR A UNITARY LABOR MOVEMENT. OTHER SPEAKERS STATED THAT IN SOME CASES MEETINGS OF SMALL GROUPS OF WORKERS (EG 122 WORKERS OUT OF 15,000 UNION MEMBERS) PASSED RESOLUTION IN FAVOR OF A UNITARY MOVEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE ENTIRE UNION MEMBERSHIP.

4. COMMENT: THE SOCIALIST PARTY RALLY WAS MORE IN THE NATURE OF POLITICAL MEETING THAN A WORKER'S DEMONSTRATION, BUT IT PROVIDED CLEAR EVIDENCE THAT THE ISSUE OF A UNITARY LABOR MOVEMENT IS CAUSING MANY PORTUGUESE TO CHOOSE BETWEEN THE COMMUNISTS AND THE SOCIALIST/PPD FACTIONS OF THE COALITION. IN THIS REGARD THE PPD REPORTEDLY QUIETLY PASSED THE WORD TO ITS SUPPORTERS THAT THEY WERE FREE TO ATTEND THE SOCIALIST PARTY RALLY BUT WITHOUT PPD BANNERS OR EMBLEMS. BY A FORCEFUL DEFENSE OF LIBERTY THE SOCIALISTS HAVE COMPENSATED SOMEWHAT FOR THE SMALLER SIZE OF THEIR RALLY AS COMPARED TO THE ONE OF JANUARY 14 SPONSORED BY THE COMMUNISTS AND INTERSINDICAL. THE SOCIALISTS AND PPD'S CONTINUED OPPOSITION TO THE PROPOSED UNITARY LABOR LAW WILL CAUSE EVEN MORE CAREFUL HANDLING OF THE ISSUE BY THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS WHEN IT MEETS JANUARY 17 TO CONSIDER THE ISSUE.

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Reason:
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